

# Kennel cough (*Bordetella* and tracheobronchitis)

**Kennel cough is a highly infectious respiratory infection that causes inflammation of the windpipe and the bronchi of the lungs.**

## ***Bordetella***

The usual cause of kennel cough, *Bordetella* is a highly contagious airborne bacteria that easily spreads between animals in close proximity (like kennels).

## **Tracheobronchitis**

Tracheobronchitis is an inflammation of the trachea (windpipe) and bronchi (lower respiratory passages). It may also cause nasal or sinus infections and, in rare cases, pneumonia, especially in weakened or elderly pets.

### What does it look like?

Common signs:

- Coughing, which may produce white, vomit-like foam
- Gagging or retching after coughing
- Decreased appetite
- Lethargy
- Abnormal barking sounds



▶ Coughing can range from occasional and mild to constant, deep hacking.



### How is it diagnosed?

- Clinical signs, like mucus in the throat
- Your pet’s history
- Physical exam results
- Lab tests of your pet’s throat swab
- X-rays

▶ Treatment for kennel cough may begin before your pet receives an official diagnosis.

### How is it treated?

Treatment may include prescription medications, including antibiotics, cough suppressants, bronchodilators (medications to expand the airways), and anti-inflammatories. If your pet has pneumonia, they will need hospitalization and intensive care with breathing treatments, respiratory support, and injectable medications.

▶ All dogs should receive regular vaccinations against *Bordetella*.



### How to help your pet

- Regularly vaccinate your dog against *Bordetella*
- Administer all medications as prescribed
- Monitor your pet’s progress carefully and schedule checkups as directed
- Keep infected pets away from other pets, use separate feeding, bedding, and grooming items, and wash your hands after handling to prevent spreading the disease
- Discourage barking (as much as possible) to help healing
- Contact your veterinary team with any questions
- Need immediate advice? Ping Vet Chat™—included in all pet Optimum Wellness Plans®!

